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STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

IOWA CITY

Department of Geography

September 28, 1960

Mr. Allen Dulles  
Director  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Dulles:

Your recent statement about it being time that American universities take a more thorough look at Communism has infinite appeal to me. I read your entire statement in the U.S. News and World Report. For some time I have felt it is dangerous to estimate a rattle snake's capabilities by counting his rattlers and dividing by ten.

It occurred to me that one effective way to represent the magnitude of the economic challenge that Communism presents is to map it. Maps have a compelling sense of authority about them. We learn to discount information that is given in written or graphic form but we do not seem to become cynical about mapped information. A colleague of mine, [REDACTED] headed the OSS mapping division during World War II. One of his jobs was to prepare war maps for President Roosevelt for the summit conferences. He received complaints that his maps were "too good," that is, they implied a certitude that the data from which they were compiled did not warrant.

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In view of the tremendous powers of conviction maps possess and to the great credence placed in your office, I wonder if it would be possible to construct a series of maps to be published in our most reputable scholarly journal (and reprinted as appropriate) based on growth rate and base level estimates received from your office. If your office could supply me with these estimates a series of maps could be prepared depicting the current situation, rate of growth, and the relative chance of absolute economic power over the years as the growth rates have time to yeast. For instance, we could effectively map the economic rank of countries in the year 1960, 1970, and 1980.

If you would supply the necessary data, or better if you or someone in your office would care to write a jointly authored article, or if you would suggest any other arrangements, I would be delighted to cooperate.

Sincerely,

William Bunge  
Assistant Professor